

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend Claim 7 as indicated below:

1. (Previously Amended) A thermoplastic composition that is melt-processable consisting essentially of (a) from 20 to 45 weight percent aliphatic, mono-functional organic acid(s) having fewer than 36 carbon atoms; and (b) ethylene, C₃ to C₈ α,β ethylenically unsaturated carboxylic acid copolymer(s), wherein greater than 90% of all the acid of (a) and (b) is neutralized.

2. (Original) The composition of claim 1 wherein about 100% of the acid in (a) and (b) is neutralized.

3. (Original) The composition of claim 1 wherein an amount of cation source in excess of the amount required to neutralize 100% of the acid in (a) and (b) is used to neutralize the acid in (a) and (b).

4. (Original) The composition of claim 1 wherein the organic acid is one or more C₆ to C₂₆ organic acids.

5. (Original) The composition of claim 4 wherein the organic acid is one or more C₆ to C₁₈ organic acids.

6. (Original) The composition of claim 5 wherein the organic acid is one or more of C₆ to C₁₂ organic acids,

7. (Currently Amended) A process to make a highly-neutralized, melt-processable ethylene copolymer comprising the steps of

(a) Melt-blending an ethylene α,β ethylenically unsaturated carboxylic acid copolymer or a melt-processable ionomer thereof with an organic acid or a salt of organic acid, and

(b) Concurrently or subsequently adding sufficient cation source in an amount in excess of the amount necessary to neutralize about 100% of all the acid moieties of the acid copolymer or ionomer thereof and the organic acid or salt thereof;

~~wherein the amount of cation source added in step (b) to neutralize about 100% of the acid moieties is in excess of the amount that is required to~~

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~~neutralize all of the acid moieties in the acid copolymer or ionomer thereof and the organic acid or salt.~~

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Added and Amended) A thermoplastic melt processable composition formed according to the process of claim 7, wherein said organic acid or salt of an organic acid is present at 20 to 45 weight percent.
